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about a sick relative. He asked for a preliminary payment in cash from me before he would say anything in front of me, having already received the customary present of fowls from the sick man's relatives. There was an atmosphere of part pantomime, part reluctant performance in front of a stranger whose presence seemed to trouble him more than it did his clients. He wore a python-skin cap with beads dangling from it, and carried the tail of a black cow bound with lead and a small skin bag with the lots in it. At first he sat holding the tail in his hands and sniffing it occasionally. Then he suddenly shook the lots out of the bag—six large beans called *kulumo* and about twenty small round nuts called *mapi*. He put snuff on the top of each bean, sprinkled snuff on the nuts, picked the nuts up in both hands, shook his hands together and threw the nuts on the ground. Some fell near the big beans, others rolled between them. He looked intently at them, then at the group waiting to consult him. 'There is someone who is sick,' he said to them and the group replied '*Siyavuma*' (we agree). They continued to chant *siyavuma* in a low tone over and over again, with an almost mesmeric effect. He meantime went on to describe the sickness, that it was a pain inside the man (the chanting was loud), that it had been on the right side (less response), in the stomach (less response), on the left side (loud response). At intervals he waved the tail in the air and knocked the leaded end on the ground to emphasize the louder response. He did not specify the complaint but advised the people consulting him to go home and kill a goat as a sacrifice to their ancestors, and give the sick man some medicines which he would sell them.

It may have been the mixture of a real consultation with my visit which produced his slightly mountebank performance, and it may also have been his combination of the role of diviner with peddling medicines which the people present for the consultation evidently expected to obtain from him. This aspect of his performance impressed itself on the Ngoni informant who was with me. He was slightly contemptuous throughout, even when the songs were being sung and taken down. He kept on muttering 'This is Nsenga,' and said afterwards as we were going away that this diviner worked only for ordinary people and their sickness, as witnessed by his telling them to sacrifice a goat, and that he would not have been acknowledged by the real Ngoni. He was making comparisons all the time between the 'people of the head' and the diviners of this type, illustrating the Ngoni esteem for the real dreamers, and the slight, sometimes great, contempt for those who combined divining with recommending medicines as remedies.

The contrast between the performance of this diviner and that of the two *izanusi* whom I saw at work in the central kingdom was considerable. My long residence in Mcakhatha and the entrée I had to all that was taking place in connexion with the sickness of Bambo Manga no doubt helped to give confidence to the diviners. The chief and his

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123 brother arranged for first one *isanusi* and then, when he became ill, for another to come and see me. In each case they concluded that I was 791 consulting them and foretold what would happen and gave me advice, warning and assurance. There was great seriousness of purpose and no mountebank atmosphere, even though they came to the courtyard of my hut and saw round them all the paraphernalia of a European's camping equipment.

791 The first diviner, who was of a Venda clan, was a very old man and greatly respected and trusted by the Nzunga clan, who were looking after Bambo Manga in Mcakhatha and who had called him several times to divine for them during her illness. His story was that he was the son of an *isanusi* and when the signs of his initiation began to appear before he reached puberty, his father recognized the fainting and the pain and refusal to eat, and said 'This child will be a diviner also.' The spirit who came to him in dreams was his father's father who had died south of the Zambesi, where his father had been born.

This man was very definite about the kind of situations for which he could and would divine and the type of advice he would give. Questioned further on this point, he gave in this order: sickness, journeys, auspicious days for holding an *ngoma* dance or a hunt, 'absent treatment' of relatives in trouble in the south asked for by letter, sickness of cattle, moving a village to a new site. He refused contemptuously any divining about stealing or death, or agricultural practices such as choosing new gardens or beginning cultivation. Neither he nor the people with him made any specific reference to the different roles of an *isanusi* among the Ngoni and the local Cewa and other tribes, but since they used the same terms for divining, *kuombeza maula* (to throw the lots), they were careful to point out what the Ngoni diviners did *not* do. In the case of sickness due [755] to 'spirits troubling', of auspicious days for journeys and other events, of cattle sickness, of moving villages, his invariable advice was to sacrifice a beast to the spirits. Most of the inquiries addressed to him were about sickness. When such an inquiry came to him in his village, he smelled his medicines and asked of *his* ancestral spirit 'Is the man likely to live or not? Who is troubling him? What shall he do?'

787 The first occasion on which I saw him divine was in the hut of a widow of the former chief, Njolomole I, which had been newly swept 791 and a new fire made. The chief and his uncle sat on either side of the fire, the diviner on the right-hand side of the door and I on the left on the woman's side. The diviner was told to begin. He pulled out his *ntibo*, the stem of a gourd, which was wrapped in bark and cloth and had inside it the medicine, and which was waxed at each end. He scraped bits of the *nsika* root into a pot with a little water in it. He put the *ntibo* in the water for a moment and then took it out and rubbed it in his hands. He put it under a flat food basket and swept his hand over the top of the basket once or twice before putting the pot on top. He gazed

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867 Correction of bad behaviour, even if thoughtless or careless, was just as often carried out by older children as by adults. I used to hold a 'children's hour' now and then round [123] the fire in my compound, or a honey party if I had been given some wild honey. These occasions were open to all and were enthusiastically organized by the older children of leading Ngoni families. They pushed the children into some sort of order, whether sitting or standing, or marching round the honey-pot to stick one finger in and lick it as they passed. When we were sitting round the fire there was always due regard for family ranking, the places immediately on my right and left being the places of honour. Children of non-Ngoni families were sharply rebuked if they failed to respond to my greeting or say farewell, and shyness was never admitted as an excuse. Scathing remarks were dealt out to any who did not say the correct formal thanks for the honey. 'You, fellow-villager, you are with the Ngoni now. Say "thank you" to the lady or she will think you are a wild animal from the bush, unable to speak.' Bad behaviour was not only corrected by adults with beating and rebukes. Sometimes the more 867 indirect form of a proverb was used, especially to correct un- 538 kindness, lack of generosity, boasting or bragging. When someone said with biting emphasis: 'Strength breaks the handle,' it was enough to deflate a young (or an old) braggart. When children plagued their elders to give them something, they rounded on the children with: 'Give! Give! that is to snatch. The child of a free man only gives.' This was invariably effective with Ngoni children who hung their heads in shame at the very idea of being thought the child of a captive. Proverbs, except ones like those quoted which were very often used, were generally enigmatic, and the meaning was hidden rather than obvious. In a mixed gathering of children and adults, a proverb might suddenly be dropped like a stone into a pond. The conversation rippled away into silence, and the boy or girl who had refused to share some peanuts or had been boasting began to wonder

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Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

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Ngoni understand and speak it. It is in fact one of the distinguishing marks between the true Ngoni and the rest. It is convenient for a chief to be able to exchange a few remarks with a relative or an important visitor in a language which the onlookers cannot follow, and I have also heard a chief do the same with one of his *indunas* during a case in court. When I played Zulu records on my gramophone the aristocrats and old warriors drew near to listen, while the nobodies who could not understand fell back naturally. It is interesting to see how this language test brings out the social distinctions based on family and rank, and produces generally an inferiority reaction among the non-Ngoni.

As other distinguishing institutions the Ngoni point out their dances[1] and songs; their former military organization with its related system of age grades; their political organization under the Paramount Chief with his hierarchy of *amakosana*, *abalumuzana*, *izinduna*, *amanxusa*, &c.; the system of courts, again a hierarchy, with the laws administered in them; their village organization which still preserves the division into *izigawa* or hamlets, characteristic of the very big Ngoni villages of old days; the Ngoni code of ethics, differing radically from the code of the neighbouring tribes, with its insistence on truth, chastity, and personal discipline; and their patrilineal descent in clans and inheritance of property. This last, superimposed upon the local matrilineal and matrilocal tribes, has created a variety of forms of marriage and inheritance which is almost the despair of the field worker. The Ngoni say proudly, 'We taught them to honour their sons' when pointing out how nephew succession has to a large extent given way before filial succession. The values inherent in certain Ngoni institutions have spread beyond their own areas, for one Chewa Paramount Chief told me he had for long admired the Ngoni system of filial succession and inheritance, and was now trying, in the teeth of much opposition, to introduce it into his country.

After I had been a little while among the Ngoni, and their chiefs and leading men had begun to realize my aim in field work, I was surprised by the help they gave me and the amount of co-operation they showed in my enquiries. Then one day an old *induna* revealed

[1] One Ngoni Paramount has prohibited any but Ngoni dances to be danced in his country.

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the reason for this enthusiasm about being 'written up'. 'At last', he said, 'someone will know about us.' He went on to speak with regret about the old days when one or two missionaries and others really knew about the Ngoni and could speak their language. He then spoke with bitterness about the present, lamenting that the Ngoni were no longer regarded as a great people. Gradually it became evident that the Ngoni, being very conscious themselves of their distinctive cultural identity, and of their positive achievements in setting up the Ngoni state, expect other people to recognize this too. They keep constantly before them memories of their past greatness, and they dwell gloomily on the coming of the Europeans which marked the end of their ascendancy.

IV. THE HISTORICAL SENSE OF THE NGONI. From the beginning of my stay among the Ngoni the chiefs and leading men impressed on me the importance of knowing about their past. In each area the Paramount Chief arranged that 'historians', that is, old men accredited by him as having correct information, should come to dictate Ngoni history to me. At first this relating of history took place in public before any who liked to listen. The old historians, however, grizzled warriors of many fights, trembled and stammered in giving their accounts, because the Paramount Chief so impressed on them the importance of the occasion, and pulled them up sharply when they hesitated over names or events. At the subsequent private sittings, where the old men could argue fiercely with each other without any fear of causing shame before an audience, the accounts were much more coherent, and, as the Paramount Chief assured me, correct. After one such taking down of history in the Paramount's village, I went to stay in the village of one of these 'historians', a very much respected *mulumuzana* and one of the 'best families'. He gently but firmly put aside my scheme of studying village organization and economic life, saying, 'First you ought to know about our beginnings'.[1] After giving me still more detailed accounts of Ngoni history, he explained that though much of their social life was mixed up to-day with that of other tribes, their history and traditions were distinct and belonged to them alone. Hence I ought to have it written

[1] He used the verb *kudauka*, which implies root or origin.

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returned between the years 1855–1865, to settle in their present habitat. The earlier part of the period was one of exploring and of conquest. The later part was the time of settlement and consolidation, during which the Ngoni 'states' emerged in the form in which they were found, when the Europeans first arrived.

The Ngoni in Mpezeni's country, when speaking of this time, call it *chamtendere* (the time of peace). Any white travellers' tales referring to these years lay stress on the constant raids carried out by the Ngoni, the fierceness of their warriors, and their ravaging of the countryside for slaves and cattle. It was obviously a time of frequent wars. Why then do the Ngoni call it a time of peace? I have asked this question of many men of rank and standing and they give one invariable reply, 'We call it *chamtendere* because the *Azungu* (Europeans) were not there to trouble us'. This statement is in effect the key to Ngoni thinking about the days of pre-white contact, and also about the advent of the Europeans. The way in which they speak of *chamtendere* is itself significant. I first heard it during a long recital of Ngoni history, and stopped the narrator to ask the meaning of the word. There was instantly an embarrassed silence and self-conscious grins in the group. The word had evidently slipped out unawares, for later on they told me that it was a word they only used among themselves. Having once been used, however, it appeared frequently in conversations with me, and proved a useful starting-point for accounts of the organization of their own state and the effects on it of the European advent. 'Ah, *chamtendere*', they say, with a deep sigh, 'then we were people'. It proved also to be a pass-word to their confidence, for whenever I mentioned *chamtendere* to a village headman, he and his notables nudged each other, and laughed and said, 'She can know about us'. When pressed to be more specific about this 'troubling' by the *Azungu* they spoke of taxes, of the ban upon raiding and warfare, of young men being called away to work, of their land being taken for European farms. These restrictions and disabilities caused by white contact they regarded as warfare, that is, as troubled times, because the Europeans forcibly prevented them from doing as they liked, just as they had done in their day to the surrounding tribes. The conquered tribes, on the other hand, naturally hailed the advent of the Europeans as a time of peace and security. Therein lies the chief

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made friends with old Mpezeni and finally made Luangeni, Mpezeni's head village, his head-quarters. He obtained mining rights in the land from Mpezeni by word of mouth, but Mpezeni signed no deed of gift or transfer. This legal point which subsequently became one of the major points at issue in the North Charterland Company case has been emphasized again and again to me in the villages. 'Mpezeni was writing nothing. He was only giving presents to Weise, and Weise gave presents to him, and Mpezeni was saying, "You may travel in my country and dig for gold. You are my friend."' They add further, 'Mpezeni did not want to make friends with the British because he had heard from the Matabele and from Nyasaland what they were doing. Weise said "I am not from the British", and so Mpezeni was making promises with him.' So deeply is this tradition of friendship between Mpezeni and Weise, with its consequences of betrayal and disaster, embedded in the Ngoni thinking, that when I stayed in the Paramount Chief's village and exchanged presents with him, many old people shook their heads and warned the young people, 'The *Azungu* war will come again. This is how that other war was beginning.'

Weise failed to establish his claim to mining rights in Mpezeni's territory with Sir Harry Johnston, then Commissioner for all British territories north of the Zambezi. Meantime the British South Africa Company obtained a new charter to extend its field north of the Zambezi, and sent an emissary to Mpezeni's kraal to make a treaty with him. Mpezeni refused. He also refused Sir Harry Johnston's emissary who met Weise at Mpezeni's kraal with a view to getting Mpezeni to make a treaty direct with the British Crown. The mining rights in Mpezeni's country were potentially valuable, and on Mpezeni's refusal to grant them were claimed by the British South Africa Company[1] on the ground of treaties made with the conquered Chewa people, whom Mpezeni had dispossessed.[2] Weise was at this time at Mpezeni's with one or two Portuguese traders and officials, making hay while the sun shone.

[1] 'Finding Mpezeni obdurate the British South Africa Company concluded treaties with all the surrounding indigenous chiefs whom Mpezeni had dispossessed. We consequently declined to acknowledge him as ruling chief.'

[2] F.O. 6537.

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TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. Gordon Lancaster.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

These tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpezeni Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapatamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed.

NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlatshwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa.

Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlatshwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Loziwawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlatshwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Mzilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna[1] for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwaza Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Mzilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1825.

In the same year, 1825, Soschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Loziwawa and Sosera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwandwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swaziland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques.

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Loziwawa and Sosera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son.

[1] [induna = military leader -- Analyst]